

OCT 05 2006

Attorney Reference Number 7214-69896-01

Application Number 10/516,862

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PATENTClaims

1. (Currently Amended) An adjustable fin system for a watercraft having a hull, said system including at least:

a fin having a base, ~~said base having a major dimension;~~

a foot coupled to said base, said foot having a first portion extending from said base and a second portion extending from said first portion, the second portion being spaced apart from said base such that a fin box receiving area is defined between the second portion of the foot and the base;

a fin box mountable in the hull of said watercraft, said fin box having a top wall, a bottom wall generally opposite the top wall, and side walls intermediate the top and bottom walls, the walls defining a cavity for receiving said foot, said cavity having an opening on a first surface of the top wall of said fin box through which said foot is inserted, ~~said opening having a major dimension;~~ and

a manually operable detent mechanism for releasably holding said fin in a plurality of different positions relative to said fin box;

wherein said opening and said base are relatively dimensioned so that when said foot is received in said cavity and when said fin is in any of the plurality of different positions, said ~~major dimension of said base~~ substantially covers said ~~major dimension of~~ said opening and at least a portion of the top wall is positioned between the base and second portion of the foot within the fin box receiving area in any of the plurality of different fin positions.

2. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 1 wherein said detent mechanism includes a first engagement means on said foot; and a second engagement means in said fin box; said first and second engagement means mutually being engagable in a plurality of different positions along a length of said cavity.

3. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 2 wherein said detent mechanism includes a first pin resiliently supported on said foot and a channel formed in said fin box and extending at least in part, in a direction of the length of said fin box, [[;]] and wherein said first and second engagement means are mutually engaged when said first pin is in said channel, and the position of the fin is changeable relative to the fin box by resilient deflection of said first pin relative to said foot and sliding of said first pin along said channel.

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4. (Original) The system according to claim 3 wherein said detent mechanism includes a resilient element which supports said first pin, said resilient element supported by said foot.
5. (Original) The system according to claim 4 wherein said resilient element is in the form of a body of resilient material disposed in a recess formed in said foot.
6. (Original) The system according to claim 4 wherein said detent mechanism includes a finger coupled at one end to said foot.
7. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 3 wherein said foot is provided with a second transversely extending pin, and wherein said second pin and said first engagement means are respectively located near opposite ends of said foot and said first pin is intermediate of said second pin and said first engagement means.
8. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 7 wherein said channel includes first and second portions for receiving said first and second pins respectively, and wherein said first and second portions are spaced from each other in a direction transverse to the length of said fin box.
9. (Original) The system according to claim 8 wherein said fin box includes a feed channel connecting said first and second portions and extending to said opening.
10. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 2 wherein one of said first and second engagement means is in the form of an elongated rack and the other of said first and second engagement means is in the form of at least one tooth for engaging said rack.
11. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 3 wherein one of said first and second engagement means is in the form of an elongated rack and the other of said first and second engagement means is in the form of at least one tooth for engaging said rack.
12. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 4 wherein one of said first and second engagement means is in the form of an elongated rack and the other of said first and second engagement means is in the form of at least one tooth for engaging said rack.

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13. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 5 wherein one of said first and second engagement means is in the form of an elongated rack and the other of said first and second engagement means is in the form of at least one tooth for engaging said rack.

14. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 6 wherein one of said first and second engagement means is in the form of an elongated rack and the other of said first and second engagement means is in the form of at least one tooth for engaging said rack.

15. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 7 wherein one of said first and second engagement means is in the form of an elongated rack and the other of said first and second engagement means is in the form of at least one tooth for engaging said rack.

16. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 8 wherein one of said first and second engagement means is in the form of an elongated rack and the other of said first and second engagement means is in the form of at least one tooth for engaging said rack.

17. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 9 wherein one of said first and second engagement means is in the form of an elongated rack and the other of said first and second engagement means is in the form of at least one tooth for engaging said rack.

18. (Currently Amended) An adjustable fin system for watercraft having a hull, comprising:
a fin terminating at one end in a foot;

a fin box mountable in the hull of said watercraft, the fin box comprising a first surface facing generally outwardly away from the hull and a cavity positioned in or adjacent the hull, the cavity having an opening defined in the first surface and sized to receive the foot of the fin, and the cavity being larger than the foot in at least one dimension to allow movement of the foot within the cavity, wherein the first surface extends about a periphery of the opening; and

a fin lock capable of being released by hand and operable to releasably lock the fin in a desired one of a plurality of positions relative to the cavity;

wherein the fin comprises an overlapping portion extending about a periphery of the fin adjacent the foot, the overlapping portion being sized to extend beyond the opening about the

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periphery of the opening and overlap at least a portion of the first surface adjacent the entire periphery of the opening when the foot is inserted in the cavity and the fin is in any one of the plurality of positions, the overlapping portion thereby restricting entry of water through the opening.

19. (Cancelled) The adjustable fin system according to claim 18 wherein the cavity is defined in the hull.

20. (Previously Presented) The adjustable fin system of claim 18 wherein the fin lock is a detent mechanism having respective portions on walls defining the cavity and the foot.